

# Laudation German Photobook Prize 19|20

The German Photobook Prize is a competition in which the best photo books from the German-Speaking countries are selected by a team of jury. Always looking for something “special” and “extraordinary”, the jury honored the achievement of the authors, the photographers, the editors and the producers of the submitted photo books. In their laudations, the members of the jury team provided insight into the reasons for their decisions and at the same time offered inspiring “Reading and Viewing Advice” for the general public to appreciate the awarded books.



German Photobook Prize 19|20  
Category: Coffee Table Books



Award in Gold

**Mallorca | MAR i MUNTANYA**

Photographer: Antonia and Alexander Feig

Text: Antonia and Alexander Feig

Design: Sandra Kubitzka



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We are approaching the Coffee Table Book category. But what exactly is a coffee table book? This much can be said: coffee table books are books that are not standing, but lying. It doesn't belong on the shelf, but on the side table. They are not ordered from left to right, but from top to bottom. Gravity determines the hierarchy of display. Not very practical with regard to reading. But it is not about reading in the sense of so-called "deep reading" of the genus referred to here. It's about entertainment. It's about building up of the mind. Divertimento. Divertimento in the positive sense. It's about a window into the beauties of the world. You can turn the pages. I don't mean that in a derogatory sense. In times when everything is being tapped for political correctness with regard to the environment, society, world events, climate, past, present and future, it must be possible to make small escapes into the realm of hedonism. I would call it a piece of freedom.

Mallorca. Mar i Muntanya, conceptualized and photographed by Antonia and Alexander Feig and illustrated and designed by Sandra Kubitzka is such a piece of freedom. The book takes us on a journey to the place of longing of the Germans, which is not by chance an island. So surrounded by turquoise-blue sea, to which the printed linen of the binding, the corresponding capital band, already refers emphatically. Framed by, I assume, clean beaches, which is what the light-grey resolution stands for. In addition sun-drenched, which could be meant by the intense yellow of the first dividing page. What it's not about is that Ballermann-Mallorca, which of course exists with its dirt, its Teutonic excesses, its imported party madness.

Right at the beginning the authors make it clear: this is not so much a book about Mallorca as one about the island of the Mallorcans. Strictly speaking, the 264-page volume is a printed declaration of love to a paradise, a dream made of paper, collaged from thoughts, aphorisms, interspersed backgrounds, information, tips, but not too much of it: it does not want to be a travel guide book.

Recipes interspersed with the ingredients evoke scents, smells and fantasies of sea salt, garlic, oven-fresh bread and olive oil. But not too much of that either. It does not want to become a cookbook either.

Rather an extended photo book, the pictorial language oscillates between factual and impressionistic, panoramic and cropped, colourful and monochrome. Images of landscapes and people, cozy villages and narrow streets, cliffs by the sea and olive groves in the inland alternate. All of this adds up to a multifaceted homage to a region and its people, a continent of manageable size and its inhabitants, a culture and its special features, including Mallorcan as a language.



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A pleasing book format. Caressing the open paper. Think about the design with white space, coloured separator pages, a modern typography, also used pictorially. An English appendix makes what is said accessible to an international audience. Oh yes, and then the lemon yellow ribbon as a bibliophile aperçu.

In short, a book that abducts and seduces. As we had realized at the beginning: Coffee table books don't stand, they lie. This year's jury was unanimous: Mallorca, by Antonia and Alexander Feig, published by Büro Wilhelm Verlag, should be right at the top.

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